

APPENDIX 1

Please bring a synopsis with you to the seminar (1-2 pages).

Synopsis

A synopsis is a *tool* in the writing process. There are three overall objectives:

1) It helps you to express (and therefore identify) the actual idea of the assignment. You can use it to think through the topic and argument of the assignment.

2) It helps you to focus and organise the assignment. A good synopsis can save you from reading literature which turns out to be irrelevant.

3) It is a good way to inform your supervisor about your project, making the supervision process more focused and detailed.

What should a synopsis contain?

1) *The motivation for the topic of the assignment.* Why do you think it is an interesting topic, and what does the assignment contribute in terms of generating new knowledge?

2) *An outline of the assignment topic,* and thereby also an indication of the literature you wish to use in drawing up

3) *a provisional thesis statement.* What exactly do you want to examine; what is your research question?

4) *A brief discussion of the argument of the assignment.* What do you expect to find, or which argument do you want to advocate?

5) *Discussion of your analytical strategy/method.* Is the assignment a case study, does it use comparative method, is it based on theoretical discussion etc.? Remember – and this is crucial – that you must explain why a comparative method (for instance) is central for answering the thesis statement.

7) *An explanation of the type of material you wish to use.* What is your textual foundation? Explain why you chose your text(s) to deal with the issues in question.

8) *An outline of the structure of the assignment and its most important sections.* Which elements are necessary to deal with the issues in the assignment? And the term *necessary* is key. A ten-page review of a given theorist is not necessary if you basically only use one specific argument.

9) *A list of the 5-10 most important books or articles within the problem area of the assignment.* Generally in relation to several of the items. *Account for what you have left out.* This information can be just as important as what you have chosen to include, so explaining this point shows that you have a comprehensive view of a specific field.